

E S S A Y
O N
H Y P O C R I S Y.

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HYPOCRISY is a most spreading evil, and goes over all the faculties of the soul, and that in a subtile insensible way, as leaven: Therefore the same word that is put for sincerity signifies also unleavened bread.

There are some who have more need to look to this evil than others.—Such as are of a popular humour. The most of their expressions to others are seldom from the deep sense of the duty they owe to one another. Hence, it is hard to converse much with the world, without some tincture of this corruption.—Such as are naturally subtile and crafty, especially when their natural cunningness is improved by their living under the gospel. This is soon turned into spiritual hypocrisy.—Such whose religion begins with a good time, or some particular advantage.—Such as are strict and superstitious observers of external circumstances and forms, and are more affected with external incentives to religion than with spiritual arguments.

Hypocrisy is either opposed to the reality of a saving work upon the soul, or to the uprightness of a man's ends and intentions. So there are two sorts of hypocrites.

First, There are some who know not themselves to be such. These are not formally hypocrites, but are so really as to GOD. Such may go long on in duty, in a drudging way, having some natural propensity to it, bred by ingenuity, education, or some common principles dropped in by the gospel. Such was Paul, 1 Tim. i. 13. who was before a *blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious*.—Such also were the foolish virgins, and the young man. A man of natural ingenuity and simplicity may be so far improved by the gospel, that he may be as simple-hearted in following the letter of it, as he was formerly in the acts of honesty. Such the young man appears to be.

It is not my *intention* only that makes me a hypocrite before GOD. Indeed, those are most to be lamented who go thus, as it were, innocently to hell. They think they love CHRIST, but they never had that grace flaming in them by the power of divine love, and spiritual gospel principles.

This mistake often arises from the want of a thorough discovery of our natural sinful state; from some general esteem of the gospel, as an excellent history, and a more noble rule of life; from the present comfort and composure they find; or from the want of a thorough examination of the soul.—O! try your hearts by law and gospel, and wait on the SPIRIT for a new trial. If ever GOD take off the vail, you will perhaps be surprised, and wonder as much what he is doing with thee as Paul did.

Yet know that there is hypocrisy in the soul when yet the man cannot be called an hypocrite. This evil lies close in the soul of a Christian. Some particular actions may be wholly tainted with hypocrisy, Gal. ii. 13. *And the other Jews disssembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.* Rev. iii. 2. *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works*

perfect before God. There may be hypocrisy in the inward and most spiritual motions of the soul.—O how few are there who fully *are* what they *appear* to be!

But that there may be such hypocrites, will appear more fully, if we consider the power of imagination. This can work as strongly in religious persuasions as in natural things. Consider also what natural principles, influenced with common grace, may amount to. In all hypocritical actings, there is a mixture of common grace and carnal principles; and all the philosophy in the world cannot advance them so much as the gospel can. The law did much to Paul and the young man; and, no doubt, if Diogenes and Seneca had lived under the gospel dispensation, they had gone as far or further than the young man did, Matth. xix.; for outward rules are as improveable by one as another. What would the letter of the law then have done, when the glimmerings of nature did so much? Now, a man, passing through those, and coming to the gospel, and believing in a common manner that this is a more pure and refined rule, the man's spirit must be more heightened, and his moral virtues more refined, and look liker graces; for though he acts from the same principles still, yet they are changed and transformed by his external knowledge of the gospel, and by the voluntary agency of the SPIRIT, who acts as he will, and is not bound to act to the utmost. Sometimes he glances upon nature, yet leaves it nature still, Heb. vi. There are many things in the gospel, suited to the improvement of the understanding and the will, and to work on the affections; as CHRIST suffering so much, and that out of love and choice. Hence a man may think he loves CHRIST, and weep at the thoughts of his sufferings, and yet the heart be unrenewed, and the man still in nature.

And indeed the new birth, and the way of God's working, is so mysterious, that a man may be easily

mistaken about it; and self-love may prompt a man to judge too favourably of himself.—As a man may have the resemblance of all the graces of the SPIRIT, so of sincerity. As one says, a man may have the complection, but not the constitution of a Christian.

But further, a man may have no sinister intentions in his duties, and yet be a hypocrite; for some have such a natural sincerity, that they would not for the world contradict their principles. Such was Abimelech's integrity, Gen. xx. 5, 6. according to his own appeal, and the testimony GOD gave to him:—*In the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands have I done this.* And God said unto him in a dream, *Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart.* So in duties, a man may preach and pray, not so much to be seen of men, as from the intention of his heart; but yet it is not to enjoy GOD or find CHRIST in these duties. So then, as simplicity of intention cannot justify an evil action, nor make an action good in itself; so a single intention may proceed from a man's natural ingenuity, or some common principle, when the heart is still naught and unrenewed.

True Christian sincere intentions, then, must flow from the pure and even workings of principles toward their ends, when there is an harmonious acting of graces in the soul, of which sincerity is as it were the spiritual tone.

Hypocrites of the above description are of several sorts.—Some, in a low sort of formality, insensibly drudge on in duties; as the ignorant Papist does with his beads and prayers; such are many Protestants. Others are zealous sincere hypocrites, who seem to have more than a form; and all they have more, is but passion and humour, not grace. Such may be strongly devoted to their way and opinion, eagerly follow it, despising others, and think all religion lost if it fall, and yet can tell nothing of a work of grace on their hearts. Again, there are some

confident, lofty hypocrites, who, though they have some general notions of grace and mercy, common apprehensions of GOD's love, and such stirrings of conscience, as, for a season, incited them to seek CHRIST, yet, as the stony ground hearers, and those, Job viii. 13. *whose hope shall perish*, have never truly felt the bitterness of the law, or the comforts of the gospel. This is the greatest judgment of GOD upon souls. 2 Thess. ii. 11. *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie*; which may be understood of this, as well as of delusions in doctrine. Finally, there is the demure and strict hypocrite, who being of an even natural temper, through natural inducements and common enlightenings, hath attained to that strictness, gravity, and evenness in his walk, as all may admire him, and none discover him; and yet be a stranger to a thorough sanctifying work, and to spiritual converse with GOD.

But in all these, self is still at the bottom; and indeed, self-love is the ground of all hypocrisy. Self acts closely and secretly, and moves strongly, and self-satisfaction is the utmost end of the most refined hypocrites.—Such usually shun to be tried; and under all their apparent graces, there is some unmortified lust. Those who live long under the power of any secret lust have great cause to dread it. It may be thou thinkest to make up this, with thy prayers upon the actings of it; but this shews thy hypocrisy the more, seeing thy lusts live still.—Hypocrites secretly envy the lustre of the gifts and graces of such as go beyond them, and cannot abide to be out-shined. If thou lovest grace as such, thou wilt love it wherever it is most pure, and shines most brightly. The Pharisees, hating CHRIST for this, discovered what they were.

These things may put us to a serious inquiry, and will discover that many have either no grace, or but little. Indeed, grace may lie in little room: there may be more of it in one motion of the heart,

than in the most specious appearances; and a poor obscure soul may have more of it than the most flourishing preacher or professor in the world. O be not dazzled with glorious forms, with orthodox opinions, or saint-like practices! Look to your inward frame, and how your spirit is acted and carried out to CHRIST and heaven, in what you speak or do.

Besides, let us consider, That as many sorts of tempers as there are, and humours and constitutions, and designs of men professing religion, and as many ways and common workings as GOD may have with men; so many sorts of hypocrites there may be, taking up a profession on those grounds. Hence then, if a man be of a duller drudging nature, he proves a hypocrite of the first sort mentioned above; if of a hot fiery temper, (for neither common grace nor special does wholly vary the natural temper,) of the second sort; if either of an easy persuadable nature, or of a bold confident nature, he proves to be of the third; if of a more grave and sober temper, of the fourth sort. And such are the most exquisite hypocrites. They will observe the smallest defect in others; and all their comforts lie in an unblamable deportment among men, that there may be no blemish in their reputation. Such often shame many poor gracious souls. Paul, touching the righteousness which is in the law, was blameless.

If a man be naturally subtle, he will exactly act his part, suit every time and turn; but all is managed to his own design. Such are ordinarily and intentionally hypocrites. So then, if a professor be not a sincere convert, as his natural temper is, such is his hypocrisy.

If a man be of a fearful temper, he may live long under terrors in a natural state, and make a great deal of work; and ordinarily, such come to be best thought of by themselves and others.

Now, these are of two sorts. Some are but more generally touched with the sense of some sin, which GOD is often checking them for, which habituates

them to a complaining way; and in this humour they go on in duties, (which they dare not omit.) Though they be not under hideous terrors, yet they cannot get rid of fears and checks; and all they do is to complain to others; but yet they have never found the power of the gospel, nor seen the depths of a deceitful heart. Such shew their hypocrisy in many ways. For, by this way of complaining, they think to get off from the suspicion of hypocrisy, though they never felt the burden of sin, nor the influence of the gospel.—They think to get the pity and compassion of other saints, and make a plaister of that for their sore.—For this, they look upon themselves as poor in spirit, always under the sense of their undone condition. Esteeming lowly of themselves; they would have others think so too.—But especially their resting (yea, taking pleasure) in complaining, without looking after CHRIST, discovers their hypocrisy. If they can but get a good word from any to whom they open their minds, they are at ease. This complaining spirit is very unseemly, except in cases of great necessity, and on extraordinary occasions. The first way the needy soul should go is to CHRIST; but we find many such complainers go away, contented with some poor common word. Ah! many make a trade of this all their days. Will this serve their turn!—But, art thou indeed troubled with thy sins? If thou wert, it would be known; thy bowels would be working out one way or other; it would be thy constant work, and thou wouldest give no rest to CHRIST without pardon, and power to kill thy corruption. But, does complaining, or any thing less than the death of thy corruption, quiet thee? Can any promises comfort thee, but as they tend directly to destroy thy corruption?—Of all professors, this sort goes on most cunningly; for we commonly judge of men by their tender sense of sin, and think such as have most of that, to have the most of a fundamental gospel-frame.

Some are under great scorching terrors of conscience, which make them most forward in duties; yea, cause them cry out, and make a great deal of noise; and yet all the while they have neither right discoveries of sin, nor of CHRIST.

For as much unbelief is hid under great terrors; so the greatest hypocrisy is often hid under the sight of sin, and the greatest terrors; for then a man will do any thing to avoid that sin and that terror. What he does is to ease his conscience; he desires no more. Hence some for a while are under mighty terrors, and ere long are as jovial again as ever. Such often snatch at any thing to comfort themselves, take from any hand as soon as from CHRIST's; any promise pleases them; though CHRIST be not in it; nay, a diversion perhaps is as good as CHRIST's blood to them; and indeed, most hypocrites are under some degree of terror. But this kind of hypocrite may by these be carried on to the greatest eagerness in duty, bemoan his condition so passionately in prayer, as would make one's heart bleed; and when alone, may be heard crying aloud. But still his conscience grows more insensible, and his heart harder, these grow so common to him at last; for GOD often, with terrors, sears a man's conscience as with a hot iron. The case of such looks very hopeless.

But look to the LORD's several ways of working, according to folks several dispositions: Take one of a greater capacity. Such a one, by common illumination and gifts, may come to be a most glorious hypocrite. The former sort was enlightened with flames, this man with calm and sun-like beams. A hypocrite of this description may have all the notions of the gospel formed in his head, may be profitable to others, and have a vein of discussing the greatest and most spiritual gospel truths.

But all these things are only in the head, are not stamped on the heart, are only artificially imprinted on the understanding, but have not the understand-

ing moulded into them.—All that he acts, in the expression of this knowledge, is with some secret glory and complacency in his knowledge, rather than in the things known. He speaks as if these things were his own, and he had received them from CHRIST; but shame him, and his heart dies; and ordinarily his parts die: God withdraws by degrees, lets corruption come in so much on him, that at last he loses all, as the foolish virgins did when their lamps went out; for there was nothing but self, and secret inward contradicting the power of religion, and working against God.

It concerns us then to know what spirit we are of, to bring ourselves under God's eye, to look within to every motion of the heart. Set yourselves under the divine eye, and say not you are a saint, till you see it written with the beams of the sun. O! how many gilded professors will be found naught in the end. *Go you cursed*, will be a great disappointment to many.

But how shall we discover if we are truly sincere? No hypocrite can hate sin as sin; that is, in its nature, in every appearance, every hint, in the first motions of it: though he may be angry at some sins that disturb him, but hates not every embryo of it, upon this single consideration that it is sin.

No hypocrite can delight to be shamed by God in his duties, and made purely nothing in his own eyes, and in the eyes of others. In his actings and relations, self-love is his principle; and this makes him not endure to be ashamed or outshined. A sincere soul, if the Lord deny him assistance in duty, in preaching, praying, opening his case to others, can, even in these cases, take pleasure to be ashamed, loves to be brought to nothing, and delights in God's humbling dealings; yea he is willing to shame himself, though he may mourn for what has provoked God to withdraw his assistance.

No hypocrite can bless or love God in his heart, when he smites him in his dearest enjoyments or

lusts. A saint can cling and cleave to CHRIST, though he seem an enemy.

No hypocrite can love the person of CHRIST, nor a saint, as a saint; but CHRIST as clothed with pardon, condescension, love, meekness, &c.; and a saint, as so tempered and conditioned.

No hypocrite can serve CHRIST pleasantly, without sensible comforts, or outward respects. A sincere soul can take pleasure in the mere mention of CHRIST, in his poorest work, wherein he is least seen. As in his infirmities, so in his reproaches—he loves the cross for CHRIST's sake.

No hypocrite can long to be like CHRIST, nor can love the holiness of CHRIST, as well as the advantages CHRIST is clothed with. A saint, if he had never so much peace and joy in his soul, would rather be like CHRIST than have all these. He loves CHRIST with such a pure love as destroys his corruption, as unbottoms him of self, and transforms him into the image of CHRIST.

No hypocrite can desire that God be glorified, though it were in the utter shaming of himself, as to all privileges and enjoyments, and abating of his comforts, self-love (as is said) being ever at the bottom.

In the next place, We shall give some characters of a hypocrite in reference to his duties.—He hath a bias in them all, another end than to serve CHRIST in them, or to be sanctified by them. If he be constant to his own heart, if he never goes GOD's errand, but when he has an errand of his own lying that way, this may be known, either at the end, or the beginning and first moving to a duty, or at the turn of it. If the aim of every duty be not chiefly the glory of GOD, and then the enjoyment of GOD, it is not right. Indeed, the bias is not always soon seen; it does not turn the bowl aside until its strength is past. O! there are infinite secret biases, that insensibly pass up and down a man's spirit:

and, according to the weight of the bias, so is its influence, and so is the man's acting.

The hypocrite is careless in those duties that are more inward, as in meditation, mortification, self-examination, &c. If he essay them at all, whenever he comes to a pinch he finds a conveniency to omit them. The closest hypocrite finds something to divert from the strength of objections, when he, upon trial, finds things not so right with him as he would: the gracious soul then pursues the search most closely. Now, as to external duties, the hypocrite is most taken with those that are most public: he can be careless in private duties, but will be mighty exact in public. If at any time he does any thing like afflicting his soul, he is proud of it, and complains against God for neglecting it, Mal. iii.

He always has his expectations, and chuses what duties suit him best, what are suitable to the time, to his humour, or the place he lives in; especially such as are most plausible. He loves not duty in itself, but can upon worldly occasions neglect it. This is a close trial for the best of them. They may in some duties be so zealous, that one would think their whole souls were in them; (O! but is CHRIST and heaven in every duty?) but in humbling duties, their soul shrinks. *He that loves not every known duty, and does not love to know his whole duty, is an hypocrite.*

He is ordinarily more concerned in lesser matters, and neglects the weightier; it may be, more eager for or against a garb, than the adorning of the soul. He trades mostly in small ware.

He looks not to his spirit or frame in duties; but is only careful how to act properly before others. A right frame lies, *1st*, In the preparation of the heart to meet with GOD; *2^{dly}*, In the spiritual behaviour of the heart before GOD in duty, the decorum and proportion of the heart unto GOD, according to the nature of the act; (for every disposi-

tion suits not every duty); 3dly, In workings of the heart, suitable to what we express. If a hypocrite can but please himself and others, he is little concerned about these.

In the midst of his zeal and forwardness in duties, he is secretly wearied of them: he is a perfect slave and drudge to duties; for none act freely, but they who act from an inward principle: he has no delight in GOD's law, CHRIST's yoke is grievous to him; if his ends and motives would let him, he would gladly be rid of it: but a true saint seldom fails in his heart; for the most part, to will is present with him, though the flesh be often weak.

All his religion lies in some duties. Take him out of these, and he is as other men, as common in his walk, as vain, foolish, and frothy. If you would know a Christian, take him out of his duties; see how he is ever in the fear of the Lord, some favour of holiness in all his conversation; he not only fasts to the LORD, but he eats and drinks to the LORD, Zech. vii. 5, 6.—*When ye fasted and mourned,—did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?*

All his duties are but the colourings of some corruptions, which he secretly keeps up; yea, his duties feed and nourish his corruptions; and, when he has hurried them over, he takes the more elbow-room to act his corruptions; his heart is then most warm for his corruptions.

He goes away satisfied from duties, though he has not found GOD in them, nor got any thing purely from him. The world's applause and admiration, yea the greatest enlargements, will not satisfy a saint; he hates himself and his duties.

He never grows by his duties; though, indeed, he may become more fluent in expression, &c. But he never grows in mortification of sin, in clearer apprehensions of gospel mysteries, in love and spirituality; but runs in a round, if not waxes more and

more formal. Now, a man grows in duties, when he is more endeared to the spiritual nature of them; when his soul finds more spiritual power to perform duties; and when he is fitted by one duty to perform another. Custom may further the outward expression, but it does not the inward frame.

We may try ourselves by these things. If at any time you have been convinced of the working of this sin in your souls, you have experienced these things. A man's closest hypocrisy lies in his duties—Other actings are easily discovered. Look not only how you have performed duties, but how you are moved and acted in them. Be more afraid of duties than of any thing. You may be in God's ways as to outward actings, and yet under the power of spiritual temptations. See then, that true grace be rooted in your heart. The poor Christian may be much ashamed before God, yet he may have that *εὐκρίνεια*, that inward sincerity, which is not only a simplicity of spirit, but a shining judgment upon his condition, that he knows how it is with him. He can say, I know such a time, at such a place, the SPIRIT moved mightily upon me, drew me, &c. when I was weak and heavy. Let not only thy own reason witness thy sincerity, but get the scripture's and the SPIRIT's witness. Seek a discerning spirit to know this sin that works so insensibly. For, when you act fairest, and think you are even lying in the dust, you are perhaps not free from much hypocrisy. No more are you, when you think, by your high contemplations, that you are more abstracted from the world. Hypocrisy makes a man like the devil: *I have chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil*; liars and deceivers like him. O what a dissection will it be, when an old hypocrite is opened! and his real character exposed to the view of an assembled world! Be every day dissecting your heart, proving every duty, and the motions of your heart in it; in their frame, workings, incomes, &c. after every prayer, anatomising every

petition. Hypocrites are now more common and more splendid and subtile than in former times; there is now so much light, &c.

But to touch on hypocrisy in some particulars: And, *first*, In prayer. In prayer lies much of the life of religion; and therefore, some hypocrites study to appear so exquisite in that, that one would think them wrestling with GOD, mightily assisted from above, and prompted by a gospel-spirit within. O! how much of GOD is let in to the saints, in their duty? and how much are their hearts let out to GOD! And hence, a hypocrite studies skill in nothing more than in that; and as to the outward part of it, may go beyond many saints.

But all he does in this is from an acquired art, not from a spirit of prayer within him. It is an artificial motion of his heart, which he hath got by industry, imitation, converse, and custom in that duty. In this art he hath striven to perfect himself, and indeed may be dexterous in it, and refresh many serious souls, when he has little sense in his own heart. Indeed, hypocrites commonly appear dead and formal in prayer; but I speak of what may be, and often is.

Again, His greatest study is about expressions, rather than for right impressions of GOD, and his own state; and in these he can be more exact than a true saint, and his expressions seem more suitable and affecting; and no wonder, when he studies nothing else. And indeed, I am apt to suspect these prayers, that are set off with most of human eloquence and wisdom, and appear most artificial.

His greatest enlargements are rather in public, than in private and secret dealings with his own heart.

He secretly rejoiceth in the very manner of expressing his wants and desires.

He is more afflicted when he wants enlargement as to expressions, than when he wants affection. If

he be enlarged as to this gift, he cares not for deadness in his heart; for these may be at once.

He loves to lengthen out his duties in public, but he can hurry them over in private, as papists do their beads, though in their public masses they be very solemn; yea, he can be content to be diverted or interrupted, and to have some excuse to his conscience. He can borrow some hours of his conscience, but he pays not again.

Both in public and private he fags at last. He is most zealous in prayer at first, and hath much ado to keep his spirit up to the first start. He is forced to pump and strain for expressions. It is ordinarily otherwise with a saint, who feels most deadness at first. And though in the end his expressions may fail, yet his affections are higher, and he is loath to leave prayer. But the hypocrite is acted from art, as a clock that grows slower in end, until it be winded up again.

He never goes to pray with an absolute present sense of the need of the SPIRIT's assistance, and of CHRIST's intercession; though, in some extraordinary work, he may have some general petition for through-bearing; but he still acts from his own strength, is never unbottomed of self, nor sees his need of CHRIST.

He prays, with seeming earnestness, for the things he never prized, nor knew the worth of; as for pardon, the enjoyment of CHRIST, &c. For he can quiet himself with common hopes of them. He hopes he may have CHRIST, &c. though now he takes his duty instead of CHRIST for the present.—He dislikes those enjoyments he prays for, as to the power, spirit, and life of them. He loves not sanctification; and as for justification, he could wish he stood upon his own legs. Nor does he diligently endeavour the attainment of those things he seeks for.

He calls GOD Father by his own spirit, not by the SPIRIT of adoption, (which is the SPIRIT of prayer); for he goes not to GOD, from an inward sense

of GOD's fatherly love. All hypocrites secretly look on GOD as a Judge, and an enemy: No man can call GOD Father, but from the SPIRIT of adoption, when love, as well as need, prompts a man to pray. Nor goes he with the fuitableness of a son-like affection to GOD, wherein much of the spirit of prayer is seen. His heart does not inwardly work toward GOD.

His heart fails him when his enlargement fails him. A faint, when groaning, may have his heart up; his groans are more to him than his enlargements. He is content GOD should shame him, if he may have but a promise to hang on.

His prayer is his only shift upon every occasion. It eases and charms him into rest after guilt. It is not prayer, but CHRIST's blood beheld in prayer, can ease a sincere soul.

If he can get tears in prayer, then he is well; these wash away his *guilt*, which, if they be not the fruits of a broken heart, are the most dangerous signs of hypocrisy, if they come not from the sense or faith of divine love. Now, such mingle their tears with their sacrifices; and this is satisfaction enough for the present. O be dead to tears!—Now, if you be acquainted with your hearts, you may see enough of them in these things.

Next, Let us look to his way in his converse with the saints; for he is careful to keep some correspondence with them, but has inward prejudices against such as walk strictly, that have a watchful and observant eye; he associates not with such, except it be for some design.—He is careful to speak and act more watchfully than ordinarily.—He cannot endure to be freely and faithfully checked by them; and he would not have others know his distempers. Whatever he think of himself, he cannot endure others should question his graces. Indeed, many can seem to take a reproof well, who will hate you for ever for it: he would have his heart neither known to himself nor others. But, O! that any body might

tell me where the crack or flaw lies, says the saint. He can take a reproof in the sharpest manner, from the sharpest tongue, if it discover and strike at his corruption; he is out of love with it, and is glad that any body would make it odious to him.—He despises such saints as are below him, and envies such as are above him, such he calls proud, high, or vain, &c.—He is prying into, and censorious of others; but slack to see or know himself—eagle-eyed abroad but owl-eyed at home.—He loves to converse only with such as are of his own humour and opinion.—He hath a secret back-door, and carnal strain, with carnal professors: his vein and humour lies that way, though his eye seems to look otherwise: he can be more familiar and merry with the one than the other, at least as much so, &c.

Then, as to his civil converse, he can put on a face suitable to all times and persons, zealous or modest, merry or melancholy, or serious.—He makes religion subservient to every principle or design.—He can pass by lesser evils in common converse, as common infirmities.—He is more troubled when he displeases men, than when he offends God.—He is more careful to keep off scandal from his person, than guilt from his *conscience*.

It was before observed, that there are a second sort of hypocrites, who are conscious of their hypocrisy; yet, for some design, from their education, or stirrings and convictions of conscience under ordinances, go on in their profession, and cannot leave it; who cannot see a real work in their souls, but go on under many inward regrets and wounds, and would have others take them for saints. Yet their convictions are not so full and strong as to shew them the deeps of their misery, and the necessity of a change of heart. Such may excel in prayer and Christian discourse; and, though they know they have never yet found CHRIST, and that they must pass under some other work than ever they

have felt, ere they be saved, cannot yet leave duty; conscience and the outward rule lies still on them: so Saul, &c. Such are self-condemned; and it seems hard, if not impossible, for a man living under a gospel ministry to have any stirrings of conscience, and not at some time or other have some discoveries of his hypocrisy; but he can bear them, though they be sharp, till they wear off entirely. When he goes to prayer, he may sensibly miss the workings of the SPIRIT of adoption. He has heard of many things in prayer, that he misses in himself; yet goes on under this regret. This is a very lamentable case indeed.

That there are such will appear; for a natural conscience may shew a man wherein his hypocrisy lies; as in prayer,—may tell him, this came from thine own spirit, it came not from the Fountain, but was forced, &c. you aimed at this or that; for, every hypocrite, beside natural light, hath an enlightened conscience: by some common work, it is not so dull as in other men; except, after a long time in hypocrisy, it be judicially hardened.—Consider how far these convictions may go, when a man lives under a clear convincing ministry; wherein he hears true Christians characterized, and the differences between them and hypocrites.—A hypocrite cannot but know what he is, when he considers the small incomes he gets by duties, and what glorious frames, what eagerness in, and love to duties, what attainments, and express blessed communion with GOD the saint gets in duties, and how low he is.—Yet GOD delights to discover a hypocrite; for it is a secret none knows but himself, and some time or other he discovers it to the world, which some think the meaning of that, Psal. cxxv. 5. *As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.*—Nay, such cannot live long under the gospel, but now and then they will come under convictions of hypocrisy.

But how comes he then to continue so, or not to

leave off all profession? *Answ.* It is a most deluding and pleasant sin; and a man takes pleasure by art to imitate nature.—At other times also, self-love blinds him, and he judges better of himself upon every common flash, &c.—Because he knows not the vileness of this sin: He sees it coldly, as he sees other sins; only thinks he is not as he should be.—He goes on in duties, thinking to wear out his hypocrisy by his duties, though he perform them in it, and contract guilt by them, and most of his hypocrisy be in duties; this is strange, but true.—He has some advantage, mean while, by his profession.—GOD Also often gives such up to a reprobate mind.—Now, the LORD both discovers them, and punishes them for their hypocrisy, by drying up their gifts; by withdrawing strength, and secretly giving them up to some corruption: They wither, John xv. 6. *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.*—He takes away light; a reprobate mind is a blinded mind, which has not that common light it had before about sin or duty; hence, no sense of Divine things. He lets some great corruption break out, as with Judas; no doubt Judas wanted not gnawings of conscience under CHRIST's ministry and eye.

GOD gives them up unto despair; and that is either secret—they tug on night and day in duties, when they are pressed in conscience, but get nothing by them—This grows insensibly: Or a frightful hideous despair, which they commonly never get out of. We never read in scripture of a hypocrite who got out of this; so Cain, Esau, Saul, Judas.

Next, Consider the nature of hypocrisy, and that will answer the question.—Though he knows himself unsound, yet he is loth others should see it, or think so of him; so Balaam, who otherwise would fain have gone to Balak, Numb. xxii. xxiii. and xxiv. chapters. Yea, none will be more severe on hypocrisy in others, even in poor saints. And tho' he know this of himself, he strives not to root out

this evil in his heart, but to smother and palliate it from men. It is far otherwise with the saints.

O then, further try yourselves ! There were never more hypocrites in any age. Have you a glorious inward freeness with God, such incomes and divine frames as we spoke of?—Can you find any time to play with your sins, so they wound you not? A saint hates motions and appearances; a hypocrite can recreate himself now and then with wanton thoughts, or be delighted with secret thoughts, when he dares not act them.—Are there not some sins and duties you count little, that you were never humbled for doing or omitting? It is the object makes sin great, not the act.—Are ye not afraid of trials? A hypocrite indeed may appeal to God and conscience; yet cannot endure to have his heart ripped up, and to be thoroughly discovered to himself or others: be quiet, conscience, says he, I will help this. If he cannot evade the authority of gospel convictions by prudential considerations, he will get spiritual pretences.—Is there not some of the fat of the cattle reserved? 1 Sam. xv. 9, 15. *But Saul and the people spared—the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them:—And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: For the people spared the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God, and the rest we have utterly destroyed:* He had a secret lust to honour himself by that.

O search this, and then consider the danger of it! for it is Satan's last reserve, and it is hard to be discerned; a man must dig deep ere he find it.—It will quickly infect all the faculties of the soul. It can kiss and kill at once; and when it gets in, a man cannot act like a man, either from scripture, reason, or judgment, but from some close particular humour. When sincerity is gone, the substance of the soul is gone.—It is most inconsistent and various in its motions and representations. A man is seldom the same,

It puts him into so many moulds, his soul and actings into so many forms, that he knows not when he is right.—It is most hateful to God, taking his name in vain; is most contrary to his simplicity, omniscience, purity, &c.

Yet, for caution, know thou, who tremblest at these things, That jealousy of thy heart, and a severe inquiry into it, is a good token. Indeed, jealousy on apparent, yea, on probable grounds, is usual with hypocrites; but there is a jealousy that arises from fear and care, lest I should be such a one, from the hatred of the thing, which makes a man restless, till he discern his integrity: is it I? said the disciples: It is true Judas said so also; but it was last of all, when he was some way forced to it; and yet, even then, he would not confess it; only he went out: that is all we hear of him in this matter till he hanged himself.—Are you glad then, that GOD should discover and destroy your hypocrisy in any way he will? Can you bless GOD for these as well as for peace, &c.?—Is thy heart set against the nature of sin, and art thou simply pursuing the enjoyment of GOD?—Can no outward act content thee, though never so glorious, without an inward frame suitable to that act?—Does omission of duty trouble thee as much as the commission of sin? especially if thou omit inward duties, as believing, &c.—Dost thou hate to act in thy own strength, as much as thou hatest outward acts of sin, or the greater distemper of spirit? If it be so, thou art no hypocrite.

Now, If you mean to avoid hypocrisy, your hearts must be principled and furnished with all the graces of the SPIRIT, and the actings of them proportionably, Philip. i. 9, 10, 11. *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere, and without offence until the day of Christ; being filled*

*with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God; for sincerity is not so much a distinct grace, as a result of the harmonious workings of all graces in all the faculties of the soul. Hence, it is not enough that a man have a good end, (Peter had an honest intention, Matth. xvi. 22. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee;) but there must be a suitableness in the understanding, will, and affections, as in the place cited; for *ἐκκενεια* there, signifies such a strain as is without mixture or composition of any foreign thing in it, whether in principles or ends. Indeed, there will be many mixtures; but when there are mixtures in principles and intentions, and these predominant, then a man is not sincere. A sincere man acts from GOD to GOD, from the SPIRIT unto CHRIST. A man's principles and ends must meet together.—The word also signifies such a clearness and perspicuity as should be in a man's soul in all his actings, as when one is under the light of the sun. If a man would avoid hypocrisy, he must have such a clearness in his conscience, such an inward shining brightness in his soul about what he does, as if he were to be judged by the sun itself, and feared no searching of heaven or earth. Try yourselves then with the strictest scrutiny. A hypocrite, for want of this, when he is under convictions as to any one thing, is confounded as to all; a sincere soul can judge itself sincere, and retains this light even when he is under convictions as to some particulars. See then that you have a clearness in your principles and ends, and that there be plainness and ingenuity in the actings of them.*

Be always under the dread of an Omniscient eye. Hypocrites know GOD sees all things, but they lie not under the dread and awe of this Omniscient GOD. Psalm cxxxix. 7. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*

Think on the folly of this sin above others. A

hypocrite is at as much pains as a saint, and yet is, and will die a beggar. The good thoughts and words of men is all he gets. What has he when age and sickness, and death and judgment comes? Oh! what despairing cries will he then utter! And, no doubt, were it not for shame, such would give over their profession.

It is a dangerous thing if it go on. Hypocrites are seldom converted, (therefore look to it); for they wear out all the principles they knew. Their convictions are only to let them know their misery, and how they have out-run their glass, and time or day; *Now they are hid*, Luke xix. 41, 42. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.* They hear but over and over again the same things; that which converts others condemns them. Not an instance of such a convert in the bible. O! it is dangerous to live without thorough increasing convictions. It is true, grace is not limited.

God will some time or other discover such; and it may be he will discover them, and you be no better; only he may let the world and your own hearts know what ye have been, and leave you under a secret deadness for ever, or else torment and consume you with it all your days. O protract not time, as often such do, thinking it will be better, temptations will be over, they may get a livelier ministry, &c. Remember the doom of such, they and the devils shall be companions in uttermost wrath: for they are vessels fitted for it, prepared and enlarged for wrath; he is every day laying up treasures of it, by sinning against the greatest light and advantages. O be afraid of this, and fright yourselves out of hypocrisy, if you can do nothing else.

Sound your hearts then to the bottom; let the line be long; give conscience leave to speak on every occasion; beg of God to try and search you.

Never come off searching yourselves, until you have discovered something or other. Severely censure yourselves; keep a jury upon your principles and aims, upon your frames, and every motion of your spirits. It is common and slight dealing with our hearts, when formal and cold, that makes so much hypocrisy. Indeed we should be careful how we question the motions of grace in us; but a watchful faint must eye and pry into every thing, his setting out in duties, his frame in them, and after them, that this evil steal not in.—None can remedy this growing distemper but the great Physician. Your disease is not incurable; to judge it so is unbelief indeed, and putting contempt on the ability of the SAVIOUR to heal. That he saves to the uttermost is as much a truth as that he exists.—If such as you arrive at heaven, you shall consider yourselves as brands plucked out of the burning.

But to encourage honest suspicious souls, know, That it is good for thee to have thy hypocrisy discovered: If he do so, bless him for it.—The more thou discoverest the secret workings of this sin, it is a sign thou growest the more in grace. The more spiritual a man grows, the more he grows in the inward fight of his heart, and of spiritual kinds of wickedness in his heart,—It is good when thou liest in wait to discover it; and, when discovered, dost sincerely bewail it. When a man is severe to himself, when perhaps charitable to others, he will not speak of it as his infirmity or failing, but will call himself wretched and miserable for it: Yea, even when his spirit is more calm and single-like, and as to his present actings sees nothing of this; yet he is afraid it steal in, and has an eye on those things that further the actings of hypocrisy; and when he has found out any thing of it, he is glad. He cares not for pleasing words unless CHRIST speaks them; he cannot endure to be accounted more of than he is; he loves rather to be ashamed, he sees so much evil in himself.